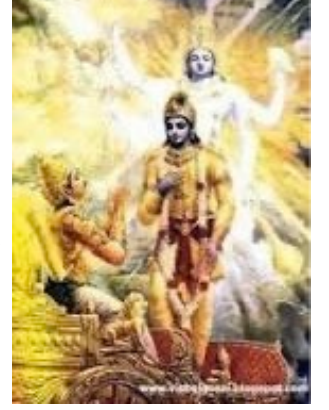


Bhagavad Gita Chapter 10, Part 9 dated 20/09/2020 by Swami Dayatmanada (Lecture delivered online from Bangalore, India)

Subject: Chapter 10, Verses 25-29.

Illustrations: Rishi Valmiki/Ratnakara. Purandara-Dasa. Swami Vivekananda - the beauty of full-moon night. Ashwattha Tree. Who is Narada? Who are *Gandharvas*? Who are *Siddhas*? Kapil Muni. Story of *Samudra-Manthan*/Churning the milk-ocean. How did Indra obtain his *Vajra*? *Kamdhenul Kama-Dhuk*. Story of Sage Vashishta and Vishwamitra. Nag-Mahashya and Cobra. Two beautiful stories related to *Varuna-Deva*. Krishna's *Guru-Dakshina (Gift to the teacher)* to Guru Sandipini. Sri Rama's Bridge.



Om Jananim Saaradam deviim,Raama-krishnam jagad-gurum

Paada-padme tayoh sriitvaa,prana-maami muhur-muhuh

ॐ वसुदेवसुतं देवं कंसचाणूरमर्दनम्। देवकीपरमानन्दं कृष्णं वन्दे जगद्गुरुम् ॥

Vasudeva sutham devam, Kamsa Chanura mardanam,

Devaki paramanandam, Krishnam vande jagat gurum

I worship Lord Krishna, who is the spiritual master of the universe, who is the son of Vasudeva, who is the Lord, who killed Kansa and Chanura, and who is the bliss of Devaki.

सर्वोपनिषदो गावो, दोग्धा गोपाल नन्दनः। पार्थो वत्सः सुधीर्भोक्ता, दुग्धं गीतामृतं महत् ॥

Sarvopanishado gaavo, dogdha gopala nandanaha|

parthovatsa: sudheerbhoktaa, dugdham gitamrutam mahat |

All the Upanishads are like cows. The milker is Krishna, the son of Nanda. Partha (Arjuna) is like a calf, while the drinkers are the wise ones. The nectar of Gita is the milk.

मूकं करोति वाचालं पङ्गुं लङ्घयते गिरिं। यत्कृपा तमहं वन्दे परमानन्द माधवम् ॥

Mookam karoti vachalam pangum langhayate girim |

Yat-krupa tamaham vande paramananda madhavam ||

I offer my respectful obeisances unto my spiritual master, the deliverer of the fallen souls. His mercy turns dumb into eloquent speakers and enables the lame to cross mountains.

Recollection:

We continue our study on the 10th Chapter of the Bhagavad Gita.

We are studying the Tenth Chapter of The Bhagavad Gita. We have been discussing the 25th Verse.

Bhagavad Gita: Chapter 10, Verse 25

महर्षीणां भृगुरहं गिरामस्म्येकमक्षरम् ।
यज्ञानां जपयज्ञोऽस्मि स्थावराणां हिमालयः ॥ 25॥

***maharṣhīṇāṁ bhṛigur ahaṁ girām asmyekam akṣharam
yajñānāṁ japa-yajño smi sthāvarāṇāṁ himālayaḥ***

[I am *Bhrigu* among the great seers and Om among all sounds. Among chants know Me to be the repetition of the Holy Name; amongst immovable things I am the Himalayas.]

yajñānām—of sacrifices; ***japa-yajñaḥ***—sacrifice of the devotional repetition of the divine names of God; ***asmi***—I am

The Lord says, “I am *Japa-Yajna* among all the *Yajnas*.”

What is *Yajna*/Sacrifice?

A lifestyle which transforms a worldly life into a spiritual life. An activity that makes our mind flow naturally, gradually but surely towards God. There are many types of *Yajna*/sacrifice. *Yajna* could be physical, mental or intellectual, etc. Of all these, the Lord categorically says, “I am *Japa-Yajna* among all *Yajnas*.” As we know, many people became perfect by repeating the names of God. They

became an instrument in the hands of the Divine Lord. There are a few examples.

Rishi Valmiki/Ratnakara:

As we know, Valmiki is not his birth name. He was a dacoit, and his actual name was Ratnakara. Once Sage Narada was attacked by Ratnakara. It is a long story. Briefly, Sage Narada wanted to initiate him with the Rama mantra. Ratnakara was unable to chant Rama. Narada advised him to repeat 'Ma Ra ' constantly. When he repeated 'Ma Ra 'repeatedly, it became 'Ra Ma'. Ratnakara meditated and repeated his mantra for a long time. A transformation happened, and he was honoured with the name Valmiki since he was reborn from the Valmiki (the ant hill). He is the first Sanskrit poet आदि कवि *Adi-Kavi* and author of Ramayana.

2) GopalaMa: A disciple of Sri Ramakrishna realised God by repeating the name of Gopala.

3) Holy Mother: advised us to repeat God's name - जपा सिद्धि *Japat-Siddhi*.

4) Chaitanya-Mahaprabhu - propagated *Sankirtana*/singing the name and glory of God.

5) Purandara-Dasa: was a great devotee of Hari and a saint from Karnataka, India. He was a composer, singer and one of the chief founding proponents of Karnataka classical music. The translation of one of his songs is like this 'I do not want You or Your Siddhi/powers. My Guru gave Your name to me, and Your name has all the five *Prana*/Vital energy. Another example is "In this Kali-Yuga repeat the name of Lord Hari." (Hari does not mean only Hindu God. God has many names - call Him God, Allah, Jesus, Buddha etc.) Sri Ramkrishna used to say, "The name and the named '*Nama and Namni*' are nothing but two ends of the same thing.

The essence is: The easiest spiritual practice is - sincerely and with faith repeating the mantra given by the Guru. There is no need to do anything else. God's name will act as a bridge to cross the ocean of samsara. We can recollect

the beautiful story narrated by Ramakrishna. Sri Ram (*Paramatma* Himself) needed to make a bridge to cross the sea. His devotee Hanuman crossed the sea in one leap by repeating Lord Ram's name. Rishi Patanjali also emphasises the importance of repeating ॐ *Pranava*/Omkar. The beauty is - everybody is an *Adhikari*/worthy of *Japa-Yajna*, even so-called sinful people. Of course, it does not mean we should not do other spiritual practices. What does it mean? If we cannot do anything else for whatever reason, then sit on your bed or lay on your bed and go on repeating God's name sincerely. "Oh Lord, I am an ignorant person. I only know your name. My Guru gave me your name and assured me that You will come and take me across." This is enough.

asmi—I am; **sthāvarāṇām**—amongst immovable things; **himālayaḥ**—the Himalayas.

The Lord says, "I am Himalaya among immovable objects."

The mountains are usually considered immobile. Spiritual language is different from scientific language. There is nothing which is motionless from a scientific point of view. We see huge mountains all over the world. However, there was a time when these mountains were not there. The magnificent mountains come into existence and grow in size for some time. A time will come when these mountains will not be there. The cycle goes on. Everything is constantly changing or, in other words moving. It is a constant movement of God in God, and by God.

The glory of the Himalayas is indescribable. Swami Vivekananda and Swami Akhandananda adored the Himalayas. It is hard to find a person who would not get mesmerised by the beauty of the Mighty Himalayas. Why? Because it is not only a mountain, it is the abode of gods and great Rishis. ((Once, I had the golden opportunity to stay and experience the beauty of the Mighty Himalayas for a few months. The beauty is indescribable.) When we experience vastness in the form of - huge mountains, oceans, and deserts, the mind gets lifted. Why? Infiniteness of the Divine is reflected in the form of these oceans, deserts, and mountains.

Swami Vivekananda - the beauty of full-moon night:

It reminds me of a beautiful incident from the life of Swami Vivekananda. When Swamiji was going to America a second time, he left England on a ship with some American disciples. One night, they were all sitting on the deck. The sky was clear; it was a full-moon night, a gentle breeze was blowing, an immense body of water was all around, and everything was silent. The moon was shining in all its glory. Swami Vivekananda was absorbed in that divine beauty for some time. Suddenly, he stood up and exclaimed in ecstasy, “If Maya is so beautiful, how much more beautiful is मायापति *Maya-Pati/Ishwara*.” I can imagine, Swami Vivekananda’s mind withdrew into an unspeakable, and unimaginable state of consciousness.

Many spiritual aspirants go to vast deserts or mountains for their spiritual practices. They feel nearer to God. These experiences used to take Sri Ramakrishna, Holy Mother and other great saints into Samadhi. In the Mahabharata in स्वर्ग रोहण पर्व *Swarga-Rohan-Parva*, we read that the Pandavas went to the Himalayas to get salvation. Many saints and sages achieved realisation in the Himalayas. Their vibrations are still alive and make the atmosphere pure, divine and serene. Swami Vivekananda established an Ashrama in the mesmerising surroundings of the Himalayas named “Advaita Ashrama, Mayavati” with the help of Mr And Mrs Saviours. It is one of the most beautiful retreats in the world. Now, the next Verse 26 -

The recording time is 12 minutes.

Bhagavad Gita: Chapter 10, Verse 26

अश्वत्थः सर्ववृक्षाणां देवर्षीणां च नारदः ।
गन्धर्वाणां चित्ररथः सिद्धानां कपिलो मुनिः ॥ 26॥

*aśvatthaḥ sarva-vṛikṣhāṇāṁ devarṣhīṇāṁ cha nāradaḥ
gandharvāṇāṁ chitrarathaḥ siddhānāṁ kapilo muniḥ*

Translation: Among all the trees, I am the *Ashvastha* tree. Of the *Devarishis*/celestial sages, I am Narad. Among the *Gandharvas*, I am Chitrarattha. Among all the perfected beings, I am Sage Kapil.

Once again four manifestations are described in this verse.

1) *aśhvattah*—the peepul tree (sacred fig tree); ***sarva-vṛikṣhāṇām***—amongst all trees.

The Lord says, “I am *Ashwattha* tree (Peepul tree/sacred fig tree) among all trees.”

As we know, there are billions of trees. Trees are of many varieties - small, big, sweet, bitter etc. Some trees have medicinal value. This reminds me of the Himalayas. The Himalayas is the store-house of many medicinal plants. There are specific medicinal plants, and the leaves of these plants can bring an almost dead man to life. I strongly believe that it is a matter of time only. One day someone will find a medicine from these plants which can cure all diseases. We need patience and God’s grace. As we know, संजीवनी बूटी *Sanjeevani Booty*/a life-giving plant has been mentioned in the Ramayana.

***Ashwattha* Tree** अश्वस्था वृक्ष :

It is also known as पीपल Peepal Tree/Holy Fig Tree, mentioned in the Fifteenth. Chapter of the Bhagavad Gita and Katha-Upanishad.

It is an enormous tree with thousands of branches and leaves. It can live for hundreds of years. Millions of birds make their sweet home on the tree. There are sweet and bitter fruits. Sometimes birds eat a sweet fruit, and sometimes a bitter fruit. The birds live on lower branches and sometimes climb to higher branches. It is a very useful tree. It helps to build our homes, furniture etc. The roots of the tree are not visible to us.

- The *Ashwattha* tree symbolises our संसार *Samsara*/world.

- Birds symbolise human beings.
- Sweet fruits symbolise happy moments.
- Bitter fruits symbolise unfortunate unhappy moments.
- Lower branches symbolise lower *Lokas*/worlds.
- Higher branches symbolise higher *lokas*.
- The world is sustained by God. God is the root of our world. He is above us and invisible, everything else is below. We go back to Brahman.
-

The Lord says, “I am *Ashwattha* among all trees.”

2) *deva-ṛishīṇām*—amongst celestial sages; *cha*—and; *nāradaḥ*—Narad;

Who is Narada?

Rishi/Seer is a great spiritual person. There are many kinds of *Rishis* -

- 1) *Manushyarishi*/*Maharishi* महर्षिः A human with tremendous spiritual knowledge becoming a man of God, is called *Manushyarishi* or *Maharshi*.
- 2) *Rajrishis* राजर्षिः and
- 3) *Devrishis* देवर्षिः There are *Rishis* among the demigods living in the higher worlds. Narada is the most important *Rishi* among *Devrishis*.

Narada: We all know about Narada. Often Narada is misrepresented in many stories. Narada means - *naran* or *jyanam* or *atmajyanam* *yo dadati saha Narada* - meaning he who bestows the knowledge of the Atman or God or Brahman upon a worthy disciple, is called Narada. Narada is a चिरंजीवी *Chiranjeevi* (ever-living) and supreme devotee of God. Sri Ramakrishna was a great fan of Rishi Narada. His compositions on Bhakti-Yoga are known as Narada Bhakti-Sutra. Narada has a divine body. We cannot see him. However, he can adopt a human body. He had appeared to



many saints like Tyagaraja and others. His mission is to go on chanting God's name Narayan while roaming around in three worlds and granting devotion to sincere devotees. He is known as त्रिलोक संचारी *Triloka-Sanchari*.

3) *gandharvāṇām*—amongst the *gandharvas*; ***chitrarathaḥ***—Chitrarath

The Lord says, “I am *Chitraratha* among all *Gandharvas*.”

Who are गंधर्व *Gandharvas*?

Gandharvas are a class of beings who are expert musicians, singers, dancers, and artists. A *Gandharva* known as *Chitraratha* is superb among all *Gandharvas*. He is an expert in all kinds of music, dance, singing, and playing instruments.

4) *siddhānām*—of all those who are perfected; ***kapilaḥ muniḥ***—sage Kapil.

The Divine Lord says, “I am sage Kapil among all perfect beings.”

Who are सिद्धा *Siddhas*?

Those who have *Siddhis*/ super-human powers. Many *Siddhas* are still alive.

Raman Maharishi and *Siddhas*:

Once Ramana Maharshi mentioned his experience with these *Siddhas*. He said, “There is a city of these *Siddhas* underneath Tirumala-Hill. Once I entered the city, *Siddhas* did not like my presence. They came to me in the form of wasps and stung me. I understood and left the place. I also closed the entrance gateway of the city of Siddha to prevent ignorant people from going there.” He further said, “There is a specific plant. A milky juice oozes from Its branches. *Siddhas* do not feel thirsty or hungry after drinking the milk for three to four weeks and can get on with their spiritual practices.”

Kapil Muni:

Kapila Muni कपिल, is a sage in Hindu tradition. According to Bhagavata Purana, he is the son of the sage *Kardama* and *Devahuti*, the daughter of the स्वयंभू *vayambhuva* Manu. He is considered an incarnation of Lord Narayan. *Kapila Muni* gave the knowledge of Sankhya Philosophy to his mother and is well-known as the founder and propagator of the *Sankhya* school of Hindu philosophy.

Story of समुद्र मंथन *Samudra-Manthan*/Churning the milk-ocean:

We all know the enchanting story of *Samudra-Manthan*. These पौराणिक *Puranic* stories are like parables and allegories, and have interesting inner meanings.

Let's begin the story.



In the *Puranic* stories, there is always a battle between *Asuras*/Demons and *Demigods/Devas*. Demons always win the war. Why? *Devas* become arrogant and weak as they become more civilised (Here, civilised meaning slave to worldly pleasures). Eventually, *Devas* realise their mistakes, pray to the Lord, get strength and win again. This battle is going on inside each one of us.

What does it mean?

The worldly, non-spiritual tendencies compared to the *Asuras*/Demons inside us. These demonic thoughts/tendencies are stronger and win our minds. The inside demon makes us unhappy. Eventually, we realise our mistake, do spiritual practices, pray to God and increase our Divine qualities (compared to *Devas*). Now the battle begins between Demons and *Devas* inside us. The positive spiritual qualities inside us win over the demonic tendency. This eternal battle is constantly going on inside us.

Non-spiritual negative thoughts and tendencies = Demon/Asura.

Spiritual positive thoughts and tendencies = Devas/Demigods

We pray and meditate to obtain Amrita. Amrita means आत्मज्ञान *Atma-Jyana*.
Atma-Jyana makes us immortal, fearless and blissful.

Now, the story begins:

- Devas got defeated by the Demons.
- Devas prayed to Lord Vishnu for help. Lord advised them to perform *Samudra-Manthana* - meaning churning the milk ocean to obtain Amrita/the elixir of eternal life. Lord Vishnu also suggested inviting the Asuras. Why? Devas would not be able to do it on their own. Devas went to Asuras and explained the availability of Amrita/the elixir of eternal life, by performing *Samudra-Manthana*. Asuras agreed happily to take part.
- The churning of the Ocean of Milk was an extensive process. Mount Meru was uprooted and used as the churning rod. A snake named वासुकि *Vasuki*/ आदिशेष *Adi-Shesha* acted as the churning rope. The great serpent coiled itself around Mount Meru. The Devas were on the tail end, and the Asuras were on the head end of the *Vasuki*. (It is a beautiful analogy. In the villages, ladies make curd from cow milk. They churn the curd and obtain ghee (the essence of milk). Similarly, by churning the ocean of milk, many objects emerged.)
- However, मंदराचल पर्वत *Mandara* was too enormous and started sinking to the bottom of the ocean. Lord Vishnu, as a tortoise कूर्म अवतार *Kurma-Avatara*, came to their rescue and supported the mountain on His shell.
- The story is marvellous. First of all, हलाहल *Halahala* poison came. It terrified the gods and the demons. The *Halahala* poison was extremely toxic and could destroy the three worlds. So, it had to be consumed by someone. Who could

drink it? Lord Shiva drank the poison to protect the three worlds. What does it signify? Spiritual practices are bitter and not enjoyable in the beginning. The aspirant requires Lord Shiva's help. Shiva grants knowledge of Atman. Knowledge of Atman destroys hardships and miseries.

- Many valuables Ratan's emerged in the form of temptations:

-

- *Chandra*
- *Parijata*
- *Airavata*
- *Kamadhenu*
- *Varuni*
- *Kalpavriksha*
- *The Apsaras*
- *Ucchaishrava*
- Goddess Lakshmi- means prosperity, wealth, happiness.
- *Panchajanya*
- Vishnu's mace and magic bow
- Gems like *Kausthubha* and *Chintamani*
- *Dhanvantari*
- *The Amrita*.

There are a lot of hidden meanings behind this. Briefly, any amount of worldly happiness is temporary. A person who does not fall prey to these temptations and can firmly reject these temptations - finally, Amrita comes. We need to know this story of *Samudra-Manthan* to understand the next verse.

The recording time is 27 minutes approx.

Bhagavad Gita: Chapter 10, Verse 27

उच्चैःश्रवसमश्वानां विद्धि माममृतोद्भवम् ।
ऐरावतं गजेन्द्राणां नराणां च नराधिपम् ॥ 27॥

***uchchaiṣhravasam aśhvānām viddhi mām amṛitodbhavam
airāvataṁ gajendrāṇām narāṇām cha narādhipam***

[Amongst horses know Me to be *Ucchaishrava*, begotten from the churning of the ocean of nectar. I am *Airavata* amongst all lordly elephants, and the king amongst humans.]

1) *uchchaiṣhravasam*— *Ucchaishrava*; *aśhvānām*—amongst horses; *viddhi*—know; *mām*—me; *amṛita-udbhavam*—begotten from the churning of the ocean of nectar.

उच्चैःश्रवा *Ucchaishrava* - extremely powerful and a magnificent living horse with seven heads. The Lord says, “I am *Ucchaishrava* among all horses. (However, we need to understand the best of everything is the manifestation of the Divine Lord.) How was *Ucchaishrava* obtained? It appeared as a bonus gift from the *Samudra-Manthana*/churning of the milk ocean. (Was given to King of Asura-Bali.)



2) *airāvataṁ*—*Airavata*; *gaja-indrāṇām*—amongst all Lordly elephants.

The Lord says, “I am ऐरावत *Airavata* among all elephants.”

As we have seen *Airavata* the most magnificent white elephant, appeared as a gift during *Samudra-Manthana*. (Indra took it.)



3) *narāṇām*—amongst humans; *cha*—and; *nara-adhipam*—the King.

The Lord says, “I am King among human beings.” What does it mean?

The Lord manifests in the Kings, rulers, चक्रवर्ती *Chakravarty* Rajas, and leaders. There are two categories of human beings. 1) Leaders and 2) Pupils. These leaders require a tremendous amount of strength, intelligence, and

willpower. Here, we refer to those leaders - who are devoted to their country and pupils. They serve their country as parents looking after their children. They exhibit divine power more than others. This idea that Kings are divine births is present in almost all countries. In Hinduism, we see the descendants of Chandra/Moon called चंद्रवंशी *Chandra-Vanshi* and of the Sun/Surya called सूर्यवंशी *Surya-Vanshi*. Pandavas were *Chandra-Vanshi*, Sri Rama was *Surya-Vanshi*. (However, this idea that King is a divine birth has been misinterpreted and misused. Idiots and selfish Kings have brought so much misery to their pupils. The responsibility for their behaviours falls on their shoulders.)

We discussed yesterday that you should salute a wealthy person. Why? His richness belongs to Goddess Lakshmi, and Lakshmi belongs to Lord Narayana. (The requirements are - money should be earned by honest means and used for noble purposes.) We should remember the beautiful teaching of Sri Ramakrishna. Once Sri Ramkrishna said to Mathur Babu, “Your wealth does not belong to you. You are only a trustee.” Each one of us is a trustee only. A person with this understanding is an ideal householder/*Grihastha*. It is conducive towards his spiritual progress, and eventually, he will realise God. If he does not understand this - he will still attain God, but after many births and with lots of suffering. Now, the next verse -

Bhagavad Gita: Chapter 10, Verse 28

आयुधानामहं वज्रं धेनूनामस्मि कामधुक् ।
प्रजनश्चास्मि कन्दर्पः सर्पाणामस्मि वासुकिः ॥ 28॥

***āyudhānām ahaṁ vajraṁ dhenūnām asmi kāmadhuk
prajanaśh chāsmi kandarpaḥ sarpāṇām asmi vāsukiḥ***

Translation: I am the *Vajra* (thunderbolt) amongst weapons and *Kamadhenu* amongst the cows. I am *Kaamdev*, the god of love, amongst all causes for procreation; and amongst serpents, I am वासुकि *Vasuki*.

Once again four manifestations are described in this verse.

1) *āyudhānām*—amongst weapons; *aham*—I; *vajram*—the *Vajra* (thunderbolt)

The Lord says, “I am *Vajra* (thunderbolt) among weapons.

Weapons are for self-protection and protecting others. Indra (Lord of gods) has a powerful weapon called *Vajra*. *Vajra* is the fiercest weapon among all weapons including the atomic bomb, hydrogen bomb etc. There is a beautiful story behind it.

How did Indra obtain his वज्र *Vajra*?

Indra, the king of the devas, was once driven out of *Devaloka* by an *Asura*/Demon named *Vritra*. The *Asura*/demon had a boon. The boon was - nobody could kill him with any known weapon and weapon made of wood or metal. Indra had power and intelligence but not a proper weapon to kill the *Asura*.

Indra, who had lost all hope of recovering his kingdom, went to Lord Vishnu. Vishnu revealed to Indra that only the weapon made from the bones of Sage *Dadhichi* would defeat *Vritra*. Indra and the other devas, therefore, approached the sage and asked him for his aid in defeating *Vritra*. *Dadhichi* happily accepted their request and gave up his life with his yogic power. The devas fashioned the वज्रयुध *Vajrayudha* from his spine. Indra used the *Vajrayudha* to defeat the *Asura*, allowing Indra to reclaim his place as the King of *Devaloka*.

2) *dhenūnām*—amongst cows; *asmi*—I am; *kāma-dhuk*—*Kamdhenu*.

The Lord says, “I am *Kamdhenu* among all cows.”

Kamdhenu कामधेनु/ *Kama-Dhuk*:

Kamdhenu is a divine cow. *Dhenu* धेनु means cow. As we know, cows are considered sacred by Hindus. Indians worship cows, and their devotion is unparalleled. Why? Cows are like



our mothers. They provide milk, and millions of babies drink cow milk to survive. Cow milk provides nourishment to millions of human beings. When a mother cannot produce milk for her baby, the baby drinks cow milk. Dairy products such as curd, ghee, and paneer are used as food regularly. Ghee is offered in *Yajnas*. People also use cow dung in various ways. Bulls are beneficial in agriculture. These are the reason Hindus worship cows.

The Lord says, "I am *Kamdhenu* among cows." What does it mean?

Kamdhenu means wish-fulfilling cow. (*Dhuk* means one who can give anything) *Kamdhenu* can give whatever a person desires - a wife, a husband, children, food, wealth, knowledge and anything.

Story of Sage Vashishta and Vishwamitra:

The story of Sage Vashishta and Vishwamitra is associated with the divine cow Kamadhenu and Vishwamitra realising that spiritual power is more powerful than the powers of a king and his weapons.

During a hunting expedition, King Vishwamitra visited the ashram of Sage Vashishta. He was impressed with the serene and peaceful environment. Sage Vashishta invited King Vishwamitra and his soldiers to have food in the ashram. Vishwamitra doubted whether sage Vashishta could feed his large entourage. So he politely requested the Sage to avoid the hardship.

Sage Vashishta invited Kamadhenu, the divine cow, which lived in the ashram of Sage Vashishta. He requested *Kamdhenu* to provide food fit for a great king. Instantaneously, *Kamdhenu* produced food fit for the royal entourage. Vishwamitra and his army ate to their heart's content. They had never tasted such tasty food and delicacies.

King Vishwamitra felt that the divine cow would be of greater use to him. He demanded the cow and offered several tempting offers in exchange for the divine cow. Sage Vashishta politely refused his offer. It led to a confrontation

between Vishwamitra and Vashishta. King Vishwamitra ordered his soldiers to capture the divine cow. But the cow shook off his tormentors and ran to Sage Vashishta.

Suddenly hordes and hordes of warriors sprang up from *Kamdhenu* and rushed towards the soldiers. Vishwamitra lost the battle, and his one hundred sons were killed.

Vishwamitra realised that his soldiers, kingly power, and weapons were no match for Vashishta's power of penance, truth and nonviolence. He then gave his kingdom to his only remaining son and went to perform austerities.

After several years of intense austerities, he became a *Rishi*. Soon, he became a *Brahmarishi* with powers equal to Sage Vashishta.

3) **prajanaḥ**—amongst causes for procreation (power of producing children); **cha**—and; **asmi**—I am; **kandarpaḥ**—**Kaamdev**, the god of love.

For propagation of a species, union between male and female counterparts is required. *Kamadeva* produces attraction and the urge for the union that leads to the propagation of a species. God wishes to propagate Himself through this process. In the Bhagavad Gita 40.42..... I manifest as a dharmic/spiritual desire (Spiritual desire means - a desire that does not make us forget God). Our bodies and minds are mere instruments. Therefore, we should understand - married life is not for our pleasure but a service to God. Many Rishis were householders. Why? Not for their pleasure but to propagate their lineage.

In the first chapter of the Bhagavad Gita, Arjuna's concern was - when worthy men die in the battle, children will be born by unworthy men, and moral values will also disappear along with the death of virtuous people.

4) **sarpāṇām**—amongst serpents; **asmi**—I am; **vāsukiḥ**—serpent Vasuki.

The Lord says, "I am serpent *Vasuki* among all serpents."

There are many types of snakes. One type is called serpents. *Vasuki* is a serpent. Lord Vishnu lies on the bed of *Vasuki*. Remember! God is manifesting as snakes. King cobra is also a manifestation of God. King cobra is not an enemy. It has venom to protect itself, not to harm anyone.

Bhagavad Gita: Chapter 10, Verse 29

अनन्तश्चास्मि नागानां वरुणो यादसामहम् ।
पितृणामर्यमा चास्मि यमः संयमतामहम् ॥ 29॥

anantaśh chāsmi nāgānāṁ varuṇo yādasām aham
pitṛiṇām aryamā chāsmi yamaḥ sanyamatām aham

Translation: Amongst the snakes, I am *Ananta*. Amongst aquatics/dwellers in the water, I am *Varun*. Amongst the departed ancestors, I am *Aryama*. Among those who practise control, I am *Yamraj*, the lord of death.

Once again, the verse describes four manifestations of the Lord.

There is a type of snake called Nagas.

The Lord says, “I am *Ananta* among nagas.”

Like *Vasuki*, अनंत *Ananta* is a name of a snake. It has thousands of heads, and Lord Vishnu sleeps on the bed made by *Ananta* - He is called अनंत शयनम् *Ananta-Shayanam*. This is the most popular vision of Lord Vishnu. In Trivandrum, Lord Vishnu's temple is called *Ananta-Shayanam*-Vishnu Temple. Bhagwan is the support of every creature in the world. *Ananta* means infinity - only infinity can lie on infinity. Infinity is the substratum of infinity. This is the meaning behind it. Many Hindus worship snakes known as *Nag-Puja*.



Nag-Mahashya and Cobra:

Nag-Mahashya was a well-known householder devotee of Sri Ramakrishna. He had a small shrine room dedicated to the Master. One day a cobra came near his house. His neighbours were shouting and wanted to kill it. Nag-Mahashya stopped them and said, “Do not kill the snake. It is a manifestation of Mother *Manasa*.” Nag-Mahashya went near the snake and said with folded hands, “Mother, this is not a safe place for you, come behind me. I shall take you to a safe place. These people are frightened. They may harm you, and you may also harm them.” Everyone was curiously watching it. The poisonous cobra followed in his footsteps. They both reached the nearby forest, and the snake cobra quickly disappeared into the woods. Nag-Mahashya perceived the cobra as a manifestation of the Divine Mother.

In South India, people worship snakes known as *Manasvi-Puja*. There is a place in India called *Manasvi* full of snakes.

2) varuṇaḥ—the celestial god of water; **yādasām**—amongst aquatics.

The Lord says, “I am *Varuna* among the water dwellers.”

Two beautiful stories related to *Varuna-Deva*;

Krishna’s गुरुदक्षिणा *Guru-Dakshina* (Gift to the teacher) to Guru Sandipini:

Both Krishna and Balaram went to *Guru-Kula* (school) of Sandipini to gain knowledge. At the end of their studies, it was time to leave *Ashrama*. Krishna reverentially asked Guru Sandipini, “Guruji, what *Guru-Dakshina* shall I offer you? Guru replied, “O, Krishna, I know You are Narayana. You do not need to come to me for knowledge. All knowledge only emanates from You. You came to study only to fulfil the tradition of *Guru-Kula*. I am honoured by your presence. You are *Jagat-Guru*/world teacher.” Lord Krishna said, “Guruji, I cannot leave the *Ashrama* without giving you *Guru-Dakshina*.” Guru thought about it and said, “Krishna, my sons were kidnapped by the *Asura*/Demon and are in captivity somewhere in the sea. I will be pleased if I could get my sons back.”

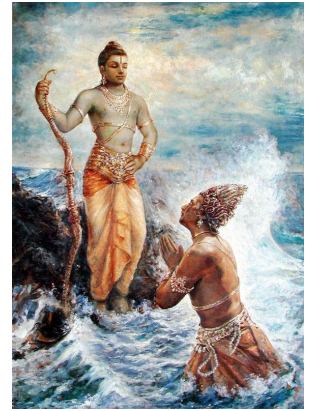
Immediately, Sri Krishna went to the sea and blew His conch. *Varuna-Deva* (god of waters) appeared and recognised Krishna as an incarnation of

Narayana. *Varuna* said with folded hands, “O, Divine Lord, What service could I offer You?” Krishna replied, “Sons of My Guru Sandipini are in captivity in your waters. I appreciate it if You release them now.” *Varuna-Deva* bought the sons of Guru and handed them to Krishna. Krishna bought the sons of Guruji to the *Ashrama*. Guru Sandipini became very happy seeing his sons. It was Lord’s beautiful *Guru-Dakshina* to His Guru.

Sri Rama’s Bridge:

In the great Indian scripture Ramayana, Rishi Valmiki describes a bridge over the ocean made of stones between Sri Lanka and Rameshwaram, India.

Sri Rama and His monkey army reached the shore of the sea. Sri Rama prayed to वरुण देव *Varuna-Deva/Samudra-Raja/King of Sea* to give way, so His army could cross the sea to reach Lanka. Lord prayed for three days and three nights. There was no response from *Varuna-Deva*. Sri Rama realised that requests and prayers were not going to work. Sri Rama said to Lakshman, “O, Brother, bring My bow and arrow. I am going to evaporate all the water in the ocean. Let the army march towards Lanka by land.” Rama took the bow in His hand and was about to discharge a powerful arrow. *Samudra-Raja* appeared and realised his mistake. This experience destroyed his arrogance. He prayed to the Lord, “O, Lord, please do not discharge Your arrow.” I will fully cooperate in the construction of the bridge. All stones with Your name Rama written on them will float on the waters.” There are many stories like this. The ocean/*Samudra* is also a repository of precious stones etc.



3) *aham*—I; *pitṛīṇām*—amongst the departed ancestors; *aryamā*—Aryama.

The Lord says, “I am *Aryama* among the departed ancestors.”

Hindus believe - there is a celestial world known as 'पितृलोक Pitru-Loka', and departed ancestors live there. Many ancestors live there, and *Aryama* is supreme among them. *Aryama* is a manifestation of God, salute him.

4) **yamaḥ**—the celestial god of death; **sanyamatām**—amongst dispensers of law; **aham**—I

Yama-Dharmraj controls everything and everybody.

The Lord says, “*Yama-Dharmraja* is My manifestation. I am Yama among all those who have powers to control.”

We discussed the following Verse of Katha-Upanishad

एको वशी सर्वभूतान्तरात्मा एकं रूपं बहुधा यः करोति।

तमात्मस्थं येऽनुपश्यन्ति धीरास्तेषां सुखं शाश्वतं नेतरेषाम् ॥

eko vaśī sarvabhūtāntarātmā ekaṁ rūpaṁ bahudhā yaḥ karoti |
tamātmasthaṁ ye'nupaśyanti dhīrāsteṣāṁ sukhaṁ śāśvataṁ netareṣāṁ ||

Kath-Upanishad 2.2.12

[Brahman is the greatest controller and emperor.]

The other interpretation is - Yama means self-control and mind control. Those who can control their mind are manifesting God's power. Self-control is by the grace of God only.

We have completed Verse 29 and will discuss Verse 30 in our next class.

Vasudeva sutham devam kamsa Chanoora mardhanam,
Devaki paramanandam Krishnam vande Jagat Gurum.

वसुदेवसुतं देवं कंसचाणूरमर्दनम् ।

देवकीपरमानन्दं कृष्णं वन्दे जगद्गुरुम् ॥

May Shri Ramakrishna, Holy Mother and Swami Vivekananda bless us all.

Om Shanti Shanti Shanti

Kind regards

(Mamta Misra)